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Message Text

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46
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 SCCT-01 SY-05

AID-05 DHA-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

/097 W

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R 071541Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5637
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJ: MIN OF INTERIOR INTERVIEW DEFENDS GRADUAL REFORM
WITHOUT EXCESSIVE RISKS

BEGIN SUMMARY. FRAGO IRIBARNE, IN SPECIAL INTERVIEW CIRCULATED
IN EUROPEAN MEDIA, DEFENDED STEP-BY-STEP GRADUAL POLITICAL
REFORM WHICH INVOLVED MINIMUM NUMBER OF RISKS. GOS WOULD NOT
TOLERATE TERRORISTS OR SEPARATISTS AND, BECAUSE OF THEIR
TOTALITARIAN CHARACTER, "COMMUNISTS", ALTHOUGH FRAGA LEFT DOOR
SLIGHT AJAR ABOUT FUTURE OF PCE. FRAGA SAID RELATIONS WITH
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EUROPE WERE TWO-WAY STREET IN WHICH BOTH SPAIN AND EUROPE

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HAVE SOMETHING TO LEARN FROM THE OTHER. IN HIS VIEW, THE EC HAD ENOUGH PROBLEMS OF ITS OWN TO RESOLVE AND SPAIN ITSELF NEEDED AT LEAST A YEAR AND A HALF TO PUT ITS HOUSE IN ORDER. END SUMMARY.

1. VP AND MIN OF THE INTERIOR, FRAGA IRIBARNE, GAVE INTERVIEW WHICH WAS PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN SPECIAL INSERT ENTITLED "EUROPA", RELEASED MAY 4 IN LE MONDE, LA STAMPA, THE TIMES, AND DIE WELT. FRAGA, WHO WAS THE FIRST MEMBER OF PRESENT GOVT TO SPELL OUT A CALENDAR FOR POLITICAL REFORMS, SAID THAT THE REFORM PROCESS WITH THE CONCLUSION OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS WOULD BE ENDED BY MAY 1977. FRAGA STRESSED THAT GOS WAS DETERMINED TO CARRY OUT ITS PROGRAM OF GRADUAL REFORM AND REFUSED TO TAKE MORE THAN THE NECESSARY RISKS IMPLICIT IN SUCH A TRANSITION. SPANIARDS, HE SAID, REFUSED TO BE DRAWN INTO "AN IMPROVISED REVOLUTION" OF THE PORTUGUESE TYPE. CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM WOULD BE MADE BY A STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS BASED ON A CONSENSUS. ENTIRE REFORM EFFORT WAS BASED ON SUPPORT BY THE POLITICAL CENTER WHICH DOES NOT WANT A POLITICAL REVOLUTION AND DOES NOT WANT TO BE CONTROLLED BY THE "RIGHT"...WHICH WOULD PREFER NOT TO DO ANYTHING.

2. WITH RESPECT TO POLITICAL PARTIES, FRAGA SAID THAT THEY WOULD BE ALLOWED. THREE GROUPS, HOWEVER, WOULD BE PROSCRIBED: A) THOSE WHICH ADVOCATE VIOLENCE SUCH AS THE ETA; B) SEPARATISTS AS DISTINCMFROM THE GROUPS WHICH SUPPORT REGIONAL AUTONOMY; AND THE C) PCE, BECAUSE OF ITS TOTALITARIAN CHARACTER AND FOREIGN SUPPORT. FRAGA, HOWEVER, IMPLIED BY HIS WORDS THAT THE BAN ON THE PCE WOULD BE TOTAL DURING THE PRESENT PHASE OF REFORM, BUT PERHAPS SUBJECT TO REVIEW IN THE FUTURE.

3. ASKED ABOUT POLITICAL PRISONERS, FRAGA SAID 250 WERE JAILED AT PRESENT FOR POLITICAL CRIMES AND ANOTHER 250 FOR ASSOCIATION WITH TERRORIST ACTS, "I MEAN MURDER." HE RECALLED THAT OF A TOTAL POPULATION OF 35,000,000 TODAY, ONLY 9,000 PEOPLE WERE BEHIND BARS, COMPARED TO 35,000 PRISONERS HELD UNDER THE REPUBLIC IN 1936 WHEN THE POPULATION WAS 28,000,000. FRAGA DEFENDED THE REARREST OF WORKER COMMISSIONS LEADER CAMACHO BECAUSE, FOLLOWING HIS RELEASE IN DEC 75, HE TOOK AN ACTIVE PART CONVERTING PROFESSIONAL STRIKES BY LABORERS INTO POLITICAL
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AGITATION.

4. WITH RESPECT TO EUROPE, FRAGA SAID THAT THE RELATIONSHIP WAS NOT A ONE-WAY STREET, INASMUCH AS SPAIN HAD SOMETHING TO GIVE TO EUROPE AS WELL AS MUCH TO RECEIVE FROM EUROPE. SPAIN NEEDS A YEAR AND A HALF TO PUT ITS HOUSE IN ORDER, HE SAID, AND IS VERY MUCH AWARE THAT THE EC ITSELF HAS ENOUGH DIFFICULTIES WITH ITS OWN NEW MEMBERS AND OTHER ISSUES. IN HIS VIEW, THERE WAS NO HURRY

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ABOUT GETTING INTO EUROPE. STABLER

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